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Wrecked on a Reef In the China Sea...

written by Captain Hinckley
who in later life was my Fathers
friend and one of the Agents of the
Equitable Fire & Marine Insurance Co
in Boston - Harold Arnold

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WRECKED ON A REEF

IN THE CHINA SEA

INCIDENTS OF DANGER, PRIVATION AND RESCUE

BY

FREDERIC HINCKLEY

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WRECKED ON A REEF IN THE CHINA SEA

"'Tis pleasant to sit by the cheerful hearth,
And hear of tempests and dangers of the deep;
To pause at times and feel that we are safe;
Then listen to the perilous tale again,
And, with eager and suspended soul, woo terror to delight us.
But to hear the roaring of the raging elements,
To look around and only see the mountain wave rise incumbent,
With its weight of bursting waters o'er the reeling bark;
To know that all human strength, all human skill avail not;
Oh God! this is indeed a dreadful thing;
And he who has endured the horror of such an hour as this
Doth never hear the storm howl around his home but he remembers it,
And thinks upon the suffering mariner."

EVERY sailor looks forward to shipwreck as an incident of his adventurous life to be naturally expected. After a few successful voyages, however, he ceases to dread it, the same as a soldier who has passed through a battle or two unscathed, dismisses from his thoughts the probability of a wound.

I chose, at the age of sixteen, a seafaring life, and made during seven years a number of voyages to China and the Mediterranean, and without mishap, serving in the various grades from boy to second mate. A severe fit of sickness

then made me resolve for a time to remain on land, but with convalescence the old fascination came over me, and I shipped in May, 1855, as second mate of the ship "Living Age," of Boston, for a voyage around the world.

This passion for the sea is a peculiar one. The life of a sailor, no matter what his rank may be, is full of hardships and privations, and death frequently stares him in the face. But to one who has any love of adventure and novelty, no occupation has such charms as the life at sea. Few who once engage in it ever lose their craving for its excitements and changes, or contentedly settle down as landsmen, after having enjoyed the pleasures of a sailor's life long enough to appreciate them.

The voyage was unlucky from the beginning. The ship was stanch and fast, and will doubtless be recalled by many old shipmasters; but we had to beat about off Cape Horn in midwinter thirty days, till we were reduced to short allowance of both food and water, and several of the sailors were laid up with scurvy. One of the crew died. Another fell from the yard while reefing the main topsail, struck the rail and dropped into the sea, where we lost him in the fury of the gale. We only reached Honolulu after 152 days of discomfort. There we discharged freight, and sailed thence for Shanghai, which was reached without any event of note, in December. At this port we loaded a cargo of silks and teas, and shipped with few exceptions a new crew. One man, a Genoese, left us from sheer superstitious fear that the old ship would come to grief. On what particular signs, beyond those of the outward voyage, he founded his dismal forebodings, I know not. They proved but too true, however, as will be seen in the sequel.

On the 25th of December, 1855, we weighed anchor for New York with twenty-three souls on board: Captain Holmes and

his wife, three mates, and eighteen men and boys before the mast. These last were Americans and English, with one or two Swedes and one Italian: an excellent set of sailors. The Northeast monsoon, with thick weather, urged us forward, without an opportunity to take observations. We moved very cautiously and with constant watchfulness, knowing the perils by which we were beset, and doing our best to avoid them; and notwithstanding the difficulties of our position, we succeeded for a while in escaping all danger.

The China Sea, as all navigators of its waters know, is full of deceitful currents and thronged with dangerous shoals. To the southward of the Island of Formosa is a small island lying in the course of vessels bound down the Chinese coast, called Pratas Island. The Chinese fishermen resort thither when fish are plenty, during the spring only. At the highest point the elevation is not more than thirty feet, crowned with scrubby brushwood some ten feet high. The shape is that of a horseshoe, enclosing an inlet of about a half mile in depth, which affords shelter to the Chinese junks. Beyond a channel of deep water which skirts the island a coral reef of varying breadth encircles all, with a circumference of full forty miles. Many a noble ship has laid her bones thereon, and our best care was taken to avoid the danger that was here presented.

On the fifth night out we knew that we were in the vicinity of the shoal, and supposed ourselves at midnight to be nearly in its latitude, and to the westward. Our course, southeasterly as near as it could be reckoned, should have carried us to the westward of the reef, but to make sure we kept on till four in the morning. Feeling sure of a clear berth we then hauled off a point more to the southward, confident of open sea ahead. At four came my watch on deck, with orders to keep a sharp lookout ahead. A short time before daylight we were bowling along

merrily, making ten knots, with the wind directly aft. The moon had gone down and the fog was uncommonly dense. A man was on lookout on the forecastle, and I was at my post peering in all directions, with the usual anxiety of an officer of the deck. While leaning over the rail trying to see under the fog, which is often lighter near the water, I thought I perceived the form of a breaker, though it appeared scarcely whiter than the crest of any wave. An instinctive sense of danger caused me to rush forward, but in an instant the ship struck with a terrific shock, which aroused and brought all hands on deck. We had been running under double-reefed fore and mizzen topsails, single-reefed main topsail, main topgallant sail, and foresail. The halyards were all let go fore and aft with no effect, as the wind directly astern kept the sails full, and prevented the yards lowering. All the canvas drew to the uttermost, causing the hull to pound heavily every time it rose with the sea, threatening instant destruction.

Our next thought was to lower the boats, but before the lashings were cut a tremendous sea swept them out of sight forever. Day had not yet dawned, and for an hour we confronted death in the darkness, without hope of rescue. The sea meantime broke over us furiously, menacing instant destruction. The topmasts were cut away without seeming to ease the ship. We were about ridding her of the foremast, when in the early glimmering of the morning light an object was discovered to leeward, in comparatively smooth water beyond the breakers, that filled some of us with consternation. It seemed a large boat crowded with men, standing up, motionless, with cruel eyes glaring. To a few of the crew who were not familiar with the China Sea, the evident alarm of the older sailors was a matter of wonder. But it was not long before they comprehended the danger of the situation.

The cry at once arose: "The pirates are waiting for daylight to come aboard and murder us!" In those seas at that period all Chinese wreckers and fishermen could be classed as incarnate fiends who thirsted for the blood of all foreigners. We had no arms, and to be defenceless among them was to provoke outrage and death. The crew gave way to despair and came aft clamoring for liquor, that they might die insensible to the tortures which those devils would surely inflict. Luckily, the mate had ere this destroyed all the spirits except one bottle of gin, and we were spared a scene of disgraceful riot. The gin was slowly doled out to the men, and they became more tractable. The boys, however, set up a dismal howling, and one sailor went raving crazy. The poor old man, with white hair streaming in the wind, stood up on a spar singing and shrieking at the top of his voice, adding to the terror of the rest.

At this moment we were astonished by the appearance from the cabin of a stranger, short, slight, with trousers turned up at the heels, a roundabout jacket, youthful features, short hair, and cap, and armed with a dirk. It was the captain's wife, who, on the first alarm, aware of the outrages from which the pirates never spared her sex, had hastily cut off her long tresses, and disguised herself as a boy. Such a noble example of self-possession and the dawn of day put an end to all panic. The dreaded pirate was perceived to be only the battered hulk of a Chinese junk, long time cast away, whose projecting ribs had assumed in the mist the appearance of a crew standing ready for attack; and this was the dread spectre that had in our excited state caused us such alarm. We had all participated in the fright, and were all amused at our useless alarm: and when the fear had passed we enjoyed rallying each other about the terrible pirates whom we saw that morning.

The memory of Mrs. Holmes' bravery and coolness was one of the most inspiring incidents of the occasion.

A more hopeful view of the situation now spread. The foremast was cut away, and by dint of hard labor cleared from the ship. Everything unnecessary for safety was thrown overboard to lighten the ship.

The after part began to break up, and became untenable. The seas broke clear over the stern, and began to wash out the cargo. Boxes of tea floated to leeward until smashed in the breakers. All moved forward with such effects as could be saved, and deliberated over the gloomy prospect. Though no definite plan of safety was presented, we commenced to build a raft of the spars left on deck.

When the day had fully opened, long lines of breakers were discovered on each side, but no land. About two ships' lengths ahead was smooth, shallow water. The gale kept up and increased, with more fog. The day wore away, with naught to encourage us. The hull lifted slowly, and then pounded down with a severe shock at every incoming roller. This continued with the untiring regularity of a machine, so long as we remained upon her.

That night we gathered under the topgallant forecastle, to get what sleep extreme fatigue might enforce. The crew occupied one side, and Mrs. Holmes and the officers the other. A bed was made for her by laying boards from the windlass to a tar-barrel. A sail was hung up to keep off the spray. The rest huddled about the deck drenched to the skin, cold and cheerless. Everything boded ill for the lives of the party.

There was little probability of rescue by passing vessels, and though we were at work upon rafts, it was doubtful whether they could be made serviceable in the stormy waters if the vessel should break up and compel us to trust ourselves to them. Altogether the outlook was a gloomy one.

Next day showed no signs of the gale moderating, but more confidence was felt in the strength of the hull. The bow drove higher up on the reef, canted over and promised to hold together for the present. Everybody was busy saving available material and provisions. The galley and contents remained uninjured. A few ventured into the cabin, and discovered that amid all the terrors of the previous day the Captain's desk had been robbed. One man, who afterward confessed, had had the courage and the meanness to risk his life during the alarm caused by the junk. This incident excited no comment at the time, but was afterwards a source of wonder as showing the force of cupidity when all passions but the love of life were supposed to be dulled. I think now that the man hoped that in some way the possession of money might be turned to good account with his captors. On the fourth day land was descried ten miles to the southward, and an observation taken which fixed our position on Pratas shoal. We determined to reach the island. The gale continued for a week, during which we worked steadily on our rafts. Sunday opened brightly with moderate weather. In the forenoon a sail was seen passing the reef. Signals were made of stray pieces of silk, and set and waved in vain. She disappeared, much to our disappointment, in the offing, without noticing the display. To have been, seemingly, so near rescue, and yet to have been abandoned, added to the depth of our despondency, and cast a new depression over our company. There was, however, a little encouragement to be derived from the fact of the vessel's appearance, as it indicated a possible rescue at a later day, by some passing ship.

Our efforts to reach the shore were quickened. Thirteen of our volunteers, including our chief officer, Mr. Campbell, were launched on a raft and swept safely into smooth water. Those

remaining on the wreck watched wistfully as the frail contrivance, with sails set and oars plying, slowly crept out of sight, and then gave way to a dire feeling of loneliness, for it was doubtful whether the adventurers would find any subsistence on shore, or be able to return, if they reached it. That night, and afterwards we hoisted a lantern, which signal the mate was to answer with a fire on the shore, assuring us of their arrival. No gleam of light met our anxious eyes, and our spirits sank very low. The next morning a heavy gale sprang up, and despairing of communication with the mate we went to work on a large boat, laid spars across the deck for launching ways, and tore up the bulwarks for planking; and the days wore on, as we labored busily at our task, hoping, almost against hope, that it might save us when we were compelled to leave the wreck. It was better, too, to keep at work, as we were more contented than we should be in merely waiting and watching for help, and there was less likelihood of disagreements and trouble among the crew, if they were kept busy.

While searching the hold for stores a barrel of English ale was found and divided among all hands. One man, however, managed to procure more than his share, and got very drunk. His antics during the day, and his urgence that the colors should be kept flying all night to attract the attention of passing vessels, gave us all a hearty fit of laughter. In the search there was also found a music-box belonging to Mrs. Holmes, much injured by the salt water, but with some music still left in it. This we kept playing constantly, for the music was superb to our ears, taking turns at winding it up until its last mutilated and fragmentary tune had died away. In vain we tinkered at it. Its last note fled, and we gave it a sailor's burial.

On the morning of the fourteenth day the prospect of the

ship holding together was so slight that the men went to the captain, asking permission to abandon her; but he refused, feeling confident that she gave the best chance for safety, as there was a large raft built for the contingency of her breaking up. He ordered me, however, if they became desperate, to go with them, but declared his determination to remain aboard with his wife, who seconded him. At this all decided to stay, and indeed as it proved it was very well we did so.

During all our perils and hardships Mrs. Holmes had shown the constancy and heroism that noble women always do in great danger. Neither the discomfort of her situation nor the prospect of death had drawn from her a sign of fear or accent of complaint, and I verily believe she would have plunged her dirk in her bosom if pirates had captured her and discovered her sex. Men and officers all adored her, and her cheering presence caused those to work with a will who would otherwise have given up to despondency.

We then built a small boat of the ceiling-boards of the cabin. Having abundance of time we took great pains, fitted her with a mast and sail, rowlocks of brass, and oars made from capstan bars, and much ornamental work, though in no possible emergency could she carry more than two men.

On the twentieth morning from the departure of the raft I was awakened by the news that a vessel was in sight. A large ship was sailing by the reef, so near that we could distinguish the man at the wheel, others loosing the mainsail, and the officer of the watch pacing the deck. We ran up all our bunting, gathered on the topgallant forecastle and shouted and waved our hats. In vain; the stranger passed on and out of sight. Every heart sank; we sat about the deck each man by himself, gloomy and despondent. Later in the day, after much discussion, somebody started the idea that the vessel was in a

hurry to reach Hong Kong, and would send aid from there, but had not answered our signals for fear of raising false hopes. This absurd and groundless theory restored us to contentedness for another week.

Meanwhile dissension had crept into our little community. The cook raised a point which puzzled our united wisdom. It is a rule of maritime law that all wages cease as soon as a vessel is wrecked. Mr. Baptistea, Frenchman, declared that if he was not to receive pay he should no longer pass his time cooking for us. This rather staggered us, but we thought to have found a fair rejoinder by admitting the justice of his argument, and adding that if he would not cook for us we should build no raft for him, and that he must depend on his own exertions to reach land. He did not quite like this, but seeing no other alternative, and being allowed the use of tools and material, began himself an independent raft, while one of the sailors was put into the galley in his place. The only spar he could get was a spare topgallant yard. This he sawed in two, and between the pieces lashed a washdeck tub. This took two days, but when his raft was done he dared not launch it, and finally agreed if we would give him a place on our raft he would go to cooking again. There was no further trouble with our "chef"; and he thenceforward devoted himself to his proper vocation, without further controversy about the proper subdivision of labor, or any question as to our relations to each other, as mutually dependent for our lives.

We had now strengthened and perfected our fleet as well as the tools and materials at hand would allow, and packed provisions and useful stores as securely as our ingenuity permitted, with the intention of making for the island at the first favorable opportunity. The vessel had held together better than we had expected, but we felt an uncertainty and distrust

as to the future, the continual pounding upon the rocks being certain eventually to break her in pieces. We preferred getting away in fair weather, to being driven away in a storm.

On the third Sunday from the mate's departure the weather was comparatively moderate. The carpenter and a whaleman named Coleman, from New London, were allowed to take the "Saucy Lucy," as the little boat was called, and try for the island. She, with her crew of two aboard, was lowered in slings and let go at a gentle interval, and successfully pulled into smooth water, and sailed on her course. That night we saw a light on the island, and knew that somebody had reached it. The gale then sprang up again and raged with unprecedented fury.

It was not until the 4th of February, 1856, the thirty-fifth day of our abode on the wreck, that the storm moderated materially. At ten in the morning a boat was sighted, which on near approach was found to be a Chinese sampan, manned by the carpenter, Coleman, and two of the mate's crew. They rowed up to the inner line of breakers, but found it impossible to pull further against the seas, which are very heavy even in the best of weather. After various ineffectual devices to establish communication had been tried, somebody bethought him of the washtub, or "cook's folly," as it had been dubbed. This was drifted to leeward to the sampan by the wind and the breakers, with a strong line attached from the ship. One man got into it, and we hauled with a will. It acted somewhat like a spoon bait for bluefish, turning over and over, but finally all four men got safely aboard. It was a glad meeting. The conversation was uproarious. Passengers from a voyage around the world could not be more heartily welcomed. Discipline was for a time relaxed, through the pleasure of seeing the plucky fellows back again, and the encouraging hope of possible rescue.

The mate and his crew had arrived safely, but had a narrow escape, as a change of the wind drove the unweildy raft to leeward and away from the island shore, which they had almost reached, drifting them seaward. Fortunately they were where the water was shallow, and jumping overboard were able to wade and finally reach the shore, towing the raft with them. The island was uninhabited, and though water and scanty means of subsistence were there, we must bring ashore all our provisions. They had built fires as agreed, and got no response from the "Living Age." In some unaccountable way the mutual beacons had been obscured. They had suffered disappointment far bitterer than ours, thinking their companions had found watery graves, while they had been barely saved.

One morning a ship was descried. All hands flocked to the beach, and a speedy rescue seemed at hand. The ship answered their signals, stood in shore, backed her sails, and lowered a boat. Suddenly a commotion was visible aboard. The boat returned and was hoisted up; the sails were filled, and in a short space she passed out of sight. What could be more provoking or mysterious? And they cursed the heartless strangers, and busied themselves in conjectures as to the cause of their cruel action.

After telling our mutual stories over and over again, the grand task of abandoning the wreck was begun, and by next afternoon we were nearly ready, when lo! another sail hove in sight, bearing down straight for the reef, on a course that would bring her ashore close by us. We did what we could to warn her, but darkness soon shut her in, and next morning she lay on the reef, about six miles to the eastward, with all sails set. Her crew left in their boats, apparently pulling for the island, and our labor was continued with the anticipation of soon meeting the newcomers.

We afterwards learned that they made for Hong Kong, were driven on to the coast to the southward, and attacked by Chinese. A number were killed, and a few survivors only reached Macao, after manifold sufferings. The ship bore the name of "Tom Bowline."

By noon of Feb. 6 we had successfully launched our large boat and one raft, with all the provisions and baggage they could safely carry, and left the "Living Age" forever. The little fleet set sail for Pratas Island just before dark, sometimes jogging along cheerfully in deep water, and at others being hauled by main strength over shallow and coral reefs. It was a night full of alarm and danger, but in the morning we rejoined our companions on the island, full of gratitude for our escape from the wreck. We now realized more than ever that it was likely to go to pieces at any moment, pounding ceaselessly with every incoming breaker. It took days and weeks to banish the feeling of thump, thump, thumping which had been continuous for more than five weeks. The island seemed all the while beating against some rock beneath, keeping time to the roar of the surf, and it was a long time before we were able to walk steadily. Even now, more than twenty years after, I sometimes fancy I hear those breakers, when dozing comfortably in my chair, and am awakened by the shock of the hull striking on the coral reef.

Our first care was to make comfortable quarters. Two tents were put up, though I slept soundly in the bush the first night, in spite of rats and scorpions which abounded. These, with one solitary cock and a few hogs left by former unfortunate mariners, were the only living creatures to be found. It was evident that our chance of life for any long period was precarious. The ship's provisions were all that could be depended on. Digging in the sand gave brackish water, which became salter the deeper you dug. We suffered keenly from choking

thirst. The vegetation was limited to coarse grass and a few stunted trees, and a small garlic garden planted by the Chinese. Far from being a comfort, this was a source of dismay. Other signs, too, betokened the presence of pirates during the past year. Paths indicated by slips of wood inscribed with Chinese characters reminded us that the time was drawing near when the fishermen would again make the island a rendezvous, and find us easy victims. This was to be expected as soon as the monsoon moderated, which might be any day. In case of capture, death, with more horrors than shipwreck could offer, would be inevitable. To add to the general dread, a number of human skeletons, of European race we all believed, lay unburied about the island. One party of men found a large mound, and keeping it carefully secret, went at dead of night to explore for treasure, but the ghastly spectacle of a grinning corpse alone rewarded and checked their search. The panic which had reigned among the crew on the morning of the wreck, well nigh resumed its sway. No means of defense could be devised, so we were fain to be content with a watchful system of lookouts. The tents were in the centre of the island, the principal lookout station was at the west end, and the provision depot with the boats at the east end.

The mates, carpenter and sailmaker busied themselves in fitting up the sampan, which turned out to be quite seaworthy, for a run over to Hong Kong. As the days passed by without the sight of a junk, all hands became more cheerful. Mrs. Holmes, who was usually attired in a nondescript costume which would have made the bloomers burst with envy, made herself a resplendent silk dress to go ashore in, which garment did great credit to the dressmaking trade of Pratas, and charmed the rude sailors.

One day, with permission, a grand expedition by some of

the sailors was made to the wreck of the ship "Thomas Chadwick," which had gone ashore in a typhoon some months before, and whose crew had occupied the island for a while. She lay nearly high and dry in the lagoon. After two days the boat was discovered returning, and on flocking to the shore the cause of the party's long absence was detected. One man stood up in the bows with a huge speaking-trumpet, shouting all sorts of orders for steering the boat, as vociferously as if she were a line of battleship. Another at the stern, with a tall stovepipe hat on, was yelling contradictorily at the top of his voice. The oarsmen were keeping up an ear-splitting and discordant chorus, with their oars all at sixes and sevens. The party being without an officer, and having discovered liquor, had enjoyed a regular sailor's spree. But in their jovialty they had not forgotten us. The boat was loaded with canned meats, lime-juice, clothing and other useful articles, which were most needful and acceptable to us.

One of their number was missing. It appears from their story that this man had shown too great eagerness for private plunder, and had refused to gather stores for the common good. His companions took offence at his selfishness, and as he remained contumacious, had left him on the wreck to his own solitary thoughts and devices. When rescued he was in a very repentant frame of mind, having made a raft which he dared not embark on. He was very glad to obey orders after that event, though given by his companions who had no authority over him.

I next made an expedition in the boat or scow built while on the wreck, to the "Tom Bowline," whose wreck I have mentioned. A previous attempt had been made by Mr. Campbell in the sampan, but owing to the heavy breakers he could not get alongside. The first night we had to pass on the "Chad-

wick." A short time after retiring I heard a man creeping cautiously into the cabin. It was George, as he was called, a Genoese, brother to the one who left us at Shanghai, who informed me that the men, led by the man who stole the captain's money, intended to take the "Tom Bowline's" boat and make for the main land. I was to be murdered during the night, and George slept across the threshold to give the alarm. But all passed off quietly, and in the morning we started for the "Tom Bowline" with pleasant weather.

Even now I can see the wonderful varieties of coral, of every hue and color of the forest, myriads of fish, of strange forms, thronging the clear waters over the reef. With all our eagerness to reach the wreck, which promised so much of use and value to the cast-away party, we could not help lingering over the charming scenery beneath the sea, which surpasses all that travelers' tales or poet's fancy can depict.

At noon we reached within one hundred yards of the "Tom Bowline." A fine boat was seen hanging to the davits, of which we resolved to get possession, and a man having got aboard by swimming, in spite of the sharks, lowered the boat, with which we boarded the ship. We found a long boat on deck, plenty of provisions, etc., a few small arms, but no ammunition. By moonlight we left the "Tom Bowline," her full cargo of tea undamaged, all her sails set, motionless,—a ghostly phantom; passed the night on the "Chadwick," and returned to Pratas Island, to find that the mate had left in the sampan the day before, with four men. He had taken advantage of the fair wind and weather in the hope of making a flying trip to Hong Kong, and bring rescue. That night a heavy blow came on, and giving up all hope for the mate, we passed three days fitting up the "Tom Bowline's" long boat, with the intention of embarking the whole party on board of her.

At last at dawn of Feb. 25 I espied on the horizon a column of black smoke; a whaler or a steamer it must be. We hoisted all our signals and launched a boat to intercept her. To our unspeakable relief the spars and smokestack of a steamer loomed up, and she shortly after came to anchor near the shore, putting out her yawl, the officer of which on hearing my story directed our boat to go aboard, while he went ashore for the remainder. The steamer was the "Shanghai," (English) from Manila, Captain Munroe. In a short time we all stood, with our effects, on a friendly deck.

Mutual congratulations and stories were exchanged with our kind rescuers, and the strange conduct of the ship which had sailed away from the mate so suddenly three weeks before was explained. She was an American coolie ship, bound from Hong Kong for San Francisco; had seen the signals of distress and run in to send relief. The boat had been lowered for this purpose when the ship suddenly struck the coral reef, stove a hole in her bottom, and sprung dangerously a-leak. The coolies showing symptoms of revolt, the boat was recalled to man the pumps and overawe the mutineers, and the vessel put on a course for Manila, the nearest port. On arrival our plight was reported, and the "Shanghai" immediately proceeded to our relief, though much out of her usual route to China.

Scarcely were we made comfortable when a second steamer made her appearance from the westward. As she neared we recognized our loyal first mate, whom we had given up for lost, with the sampan. Thus double rescue arrived on the same day. The sampan had reached Hong Kong after a perilous but rapid passage for so small a craft, and the English man-of-war "Barracouta" had put off immediately to our assistance.

Thus ends the story of our shipwreck. We were soon landed at Hong Kong, and dispersed to various parts of the globe. I

wonder how many of that party now survive, and whether any of them have ever passed through a more anxious period than their fifty-six days on Pratas reef. Since separating from them at Hong Kong I have never met any of them except Captain Holmes and his brave and devoted wife, who gave up the sea and settled down to a life on shore, and though in many later perils, have never forgotten the incidents of those days, as she was certainly never forgotten by any of the members of the company which for so many days trod with her the deck of the wrecked "Living Age."

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